

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AS-01 IO-14 ACDA-10 EB-07 TRSE-00

OMB-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15

EUR-12 COME-00 EPG-02 SSO-00 NSCE-00 /113 W

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FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4785

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EGEN, MPOL, KS

SUBJ: AMCHAM KOREA'S OPEN LETTER TO PRESIDENT OPPOSING U.S. TROOP
WITHDRAWAL

1. FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE IN KOREA'S
LETTER DATED JUNE 23, 1977, ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT.

ACCORDING TO AMCHAM OFFICE, AMCHAM PRESIDENT RICHARD C. WITT
TRAVELED TO THE U.S. LAST WEEK WITH ORIGINAL COPY OF LETTER,
WHICH WAS EVIDENTLY RELEASED THERE. LOCAL PRESS FRONT-PAGED
EXCERPTS FROM LETTER IN JUNE 28 EDITIONS.

2. BEGIN QUOTE. THE PRESIDENT, THE WHITE HOUSE, WASHINGTON,
D.C., U.S.A.; DEAR PRESIDENT,

1. THE MEMBERS OF THE AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE IN SEOUL,
KOREA HAVE LIVED UNDER THE SHADOW OF THE NORTH KOREAN COMMUNIST
REGIME SINCE THE ARMISTICE WAS SIGNED NEARLY 24 YEARS AGO.
THE ARMISTICE NOTWITHSTANDING, THE NORTH KOREAN'S HOSTILITY,
AGGRESSIVE ACTIONS, AND DECLARED POLICY TO FORCIBLY UNIFY ALL
KOREA UNDER COMMUNIST CONTROL CONTINUES UNABATED. BOTH THEIR
IDEOLOGICAL ATTACKS AND OVERT HOSTILE ACTIONS CLEARLY SHOW THAT
THERE HAS BEEN NO CHANGE IN THIS LONGSTANDING OBJECTIVE. FACED
WITH ECONOMIC DISASTER IN THEIR OWN SOCIETY, AND HAVING FAILED
IN THEIR ATTEMPTS TO TOPPLE THE SOUTH DURING THE PAST 24 YEARS,
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THE RESORT TO ARMS IS THE ONLY VIABLE OPTION REMAINING TO THE
NORTH TO ACCOMPLISH THIS DOMINATION.

2. IT IS INESCAPABLE THAT THE WITHDRAWAL OF U.S. FORCES IS
ESSENTIAL TO THE NORTH KOREAN GOAL OF UNIFICATION ON THEIR OWN
TERMS AND THAT THE USE OF FORCE IS INTRINSIC TO THAT GOAL. THUS,
THE MEMBERS OF THE AMERICAN CHAMBER CANNOT IDENTIFY WHICH U.S.

POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND MILITARY INTERESTS ARE BEING SERVED BY THE WITHDRAWAL. OUR CONCERN IS NOT BASED ON A FEAR THAT THE FINE SOUTH KOREAN ARMED FORCES CANNOT REPEL AN ATTACK. RATHER, OUR CONCERN IS BASED ON THE PERCEPTION OF THE UNITED STATES COMMITMENT BY ASIAN LEADERS -- PARTICULARLY THAT OF KIM IL SUNG WHO IS A NOTORIOUSLY UNPREDICTABLE PERSON. IN REPELLING AN ATTACK BY THE NORTH, THE COST TO BOTH SOUTH KOREA AND THE U.S. WILL BE GREAT IN TERMS OF LIVES, DESTRUCTION AND HARD EARNED PROGRESS. CERTAINLY, THE COST OF A "MISCALCULATION" BY THE NORTH, AND THE COST TO REINTRODUCE U.S. GROUND FORCES UNDER OUR DEFENSE TREATY FAR EXCEEDS THE COSTS OF THE CURRENT DEPLOYMENT. FROM OUR VIEWPOINT, THE EXPENSES INVOLVED IN STATIONING THESE TROOPS IN KOREA ARE TAXPAYERS DOLLARS WELL SPENT. IN FACT, WE ARE TOLD THAT THE COST TO THE U.S. GOVERNMENT OF STATIONING THESE FORCES IN KOREA IS LESS THAN COSTS REQUIRED TO STATION THEM IN THE UNITED STATES.

3. IN THE FACE OF A DETERIORATING SITUATION IN NORTH KOREA THE U.S. ACTIONS IN WITHDRAWING ITS FORCES FROM THE SOUTH APPEARS TO MOST ASIAN LEADERS TO CONTAIN UNACCEPTABLY HIGH RISKS AND TO BE AMERICAN DEMOCRACY AND POWER IN RETREAT. SINCE THE USSR IS BOTH AN ASIATIC AS WELL AS A EUROPEAN POWER, THE CONTINUANCE OF AN OUTDATED STRATEGY THAT ASIA IS SECOND TO EUROPE IS UNREALISTIC IN TODAY'S TRUTHS. THE ECONOMIC POWER OF JAPAN, THE RISING TIDE IN THE PEOPLES' REPUBLIC OF CHINA, AND THE OMNIPRESENCE OF THE SOVIET UNION COMPELS THE UNITED STATES UNCLASSIFIED

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TO REASSESS ASIA AND EQUATE IT ON EQUAL TERMS WITH EUROPE. BY NOT WITHDRAWING IN EUROPE, WE ARE DISPLAYING A DUAL STANDARD AND SHOWING A SHOCKING LACK OF MORALITY BY INDICATING THAT ASIANS ARE EXPENDABLE TO COMMUNISM WHILE EUROPEANS ARE NOT.

4. IN CONCLUSION, THE BALANCED PRESENCE OF U.S. FORCES HAS BEEN A DETERENT TO LARGE SCALE, RASH ACTIONS BY THE NORTH KOREAN COMMUNIST REGIME AND AN UNEASY PEACE EXISTS ON THE PENINSULA. NOW THIS FRAGILE BALANCE OF POWER IS PLACED IN SERIOUS JEOPARDY BY THE ANNOUNCED TROOP WITHDRAWAL. THE WITHDRAWAL WHICH INEVITABLY MUST BE FOLLOWED BY AN INCREASE IN JAPAN'S DEFENSE POSTURE, MAY SHATTER THE DEFACTO, TACIT ALLIANCE BETWEEN JAPAN, CHINA AND THE UNITED STATES. UNTIL THE TIME WHEN A NON-AGGRESSION PACT HAS BEEN CONCLUDED BETWEEN THE NORTH AND SOUTH AND THE MAJOR POWERS AGREE TO TERMS FOR CONTINUING STABILITY IN THE AREA, THE WITHDRAWAL PLAN CAN BE CERTAIN TO DESTABILIZE THIS CRITICAL AREA OF ASIA AND INVITES AN ATTEMPT BY THE NORTH TO UNIFY THE PENINSULA BY FORCE OF ARMS. WE BELIEVE THE WITHDRAWAL OF U.S. GROUND FORCES AT THIS TIME IS AN ERROR AND SERVES NO USEFUL PURPOSE. THERE IS NO WAY THAT THE PEACE, PROSPERITY AND WELL BEING OF THE KOREAN PEOPLE AND THE UNITED STATES CAN BE ENHANCED BY THIS ACTION. VERY TRULY YOURS,

RICHARD C. WITT, PRESIDENT. UNQUOTE.

5. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH THE EMBASSY WAS AWARE THAT THE CHAMBER HAD

BEEN CONSIDERING SENDING SUCH A LETTER, WE WERE NOT CONSULTED
ON ITS DECISION TO DO SO NOR ON THE CONTENT OF THE LETTER.
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Message Attributes

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Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 28-Jun-1977 12:00:00 am
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Decaption Note:
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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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Executive Order: N/A
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